accident is still unknown, but some thousands of fagots and several tons of coals were burnt, and the stone covering of the hall-flooring alone saved the whole edifice. ——Victoria Park is now becoming a popular place of resort at the east end, and on and since Easter Sunday has attracted a large number of visitors. On Sunday and Monday, says the *Morning Herald*, it was estimated that upwards of 20,000 persons passed through the gates at the leading entrance in Bishop Bonner's-fields. Since February great progress has been made in the plantations, and the lake is nearly completed, and partly filled with water. The sites for two cricket-grounds have also been marked out, and every thing in connection with it presents a more forward appearance. Building speculation is going on very actively in the vicinity.——The extension of a line of railway through "the rookeries" of Lambeth to the very centre of the metropolis, through a densely-populated neighbourhood, is an undertaking so immense, that, as the *Morning Post* observes, the wealthiest corporations, and even sovereigns themselves, in the earlier periods of our national history, would have shrunk from it in dismay. But now, such is the spirit of railway enterprise, that entire streets are swept away, and every interest indemnified, with the same ease as our ancestors would have cleared away the furze and brushwood of any heath or common which they were preparing to bring into cultivation. The prospectus of such a scheme is advertised, the shares are taken, the legislative act is obtained, and away go the filthy "rookeries" and polluted dens of human misery. A free passage, like a grand arterial line, is made through the stench-exhaling courts, alleys, and purlieus, where the squalid sons of indigence and toil have long taken up their abodes—where the foot of gentility has rarely trod, and where the voice of civilised man is scarcely ever heard.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

The Public Club-chambers, proposed to be erected at Cambridge, are not likely, it appears, to fall to the ground before they are built, as many a magnificent scheme is doomed to do. The inhabitants of this distinguished city are taking a 'pride' in their resolution to erect an edifice 'worthy' of both city and citizens. "The plan has now assumed a definite shape," emphatically speaking at least, if not literally; and accommodation is designed to be afforded, says the *Cambridge Advertiser*, "for a sessions court, a council chamber, and besides a variety of other apartments for municipal and other public purposes, a police station and police court, a spacious assembly room, excise office, post office, savings bank, stamp office, and rooms for scientific and literary societies." For the information of other towns who may be meditating a move in the like direction, we may add that the requisite funds, in this instance, are to be raised on bonds repayable by instalments, in thirty years, out of the rents, &c.; and on charges, for the general benefit, on the borough funds. Leases on the borough commons are proposed too, if requisite, in aid of the needful. For carrying out comprehensive schemes such as this, the sanction of Parliament as well as the co-operation of the borough council will be necessary; and, accordingly, a meeting of the corporate body of Cambridge was appointed to be held on Thursday for the latter purpose. —— The screen or carved-stone screen contributed to St. Mary's Church, Bury St. Edmund's, by a generous but anonymous lady, is now finished, and the painted window, a family memorial of the Bishops of London and others, is in course of fixture over it. Mr. Cottingham's design for the completion of the chancel, however, according to the *Bury Herald*, is still *in statu quo*, together with the "mean slab" which records the interment of one of the mighty blood royals of old England, Mary Tudor, some time Queen of France.——The gas movement has begun to ferment in Needham Market, where the propriety of lighting the town with gas was clearly and unanimously seen at a recent public meeting, when preparations were made for the self-infliction of the requisite rate.——The walls of the Ipswich museum are now rising upwards of ten feet from the ground. There will be various rooms besides a spacious lobby, with a library and apartment for specimens, which last are in course of collection.——The old morass, called the Denes, at Yarmouth, is said to be springing up into quite an extensive town. The drainage deposit, on the value and necessity of saving which, in other cases, so much has been said of late, is here quietly used up already on the very system so strongly recommended. An immense drain conveys all to the river level, where a steam-engine raises it for sale to the farmers, who exchange for it an annual revenue of 6,000*l.*——The Surrey magistrates have agreed to lay out 110,000*l.* on the erection of a new prison.——At Deal some improvements are in progress, amongst which a building opposite the railway entrance, erected by Mr. Marable, builder, as a public refectory, is spoken of as one of the most prominent. ——The new steam basin in the dockyard, at Portsmouth, in course of formation by Mr. Peter Rolt, the contractor, is progressing rapidly, and when completed, it is thought, will be the largest in the empire, the dam being in length 3,000 feet. On these works 1,200 workmen are at present employed.——The new building at Cowes, lately dedicated to the Medina lodge of Freemasons, No. 41, is a Doric structure, designed and erected by brother Frederick Wyatt, the "provincial superintendent of works."——The erection of the Birmingham Licensed Victualler's Asylum, designed by Mr. D. R. Hill, is about to be commenced. The building, which is in the Elizabethan style, will consist of a centre, with a porch, and two wings, of two stories, with 70 yards of frontage, approached by a centre gate, and separated from the road by an iron railing and shrubbery. It will afford an asylum for ten families. The site is in the Bristol road.——The foundation-stone of the new church at the Church of England Cemetery, at Birmingham, was laid on Tuesday week. Messrs. Hamilton and Medland are the architects, and Mr. F. Burton the builder.——The chief stone of a new church was laid at Whitworth, in the parish of Rochdale, on Thursday week. Mr. Joseph Clarke, of London, is the architect, and Mr. Joseph Bass, clerk of the works.——The new park at Birkenhead, the opening of which formed part of the ceremonial at the opening of the docks, has been formed at a cost of 127,775*l.* The new market, also opened, cost 26,000*l.* The new warehouses on the day of opening were fitted up as reception, banquet, and ball rooms. In the reception-room, 20 feet by 45 feet, was a cascade of water falling into a large artificial basin, surrounded by flowers. On the right of the reception-room was the ball-room, 137 feet long by 45 feet wide. This apartment was shaped in the form of a spacious tent by means of fluted drapery, alternately pink and white. Pier and chimney glasses were ranged along the sides, and at either end of the apartment was a raised dais for the spectators. To the left there was an ante-room, in which were stationed the band of the 1st Royals. The banquet room, 136 feet by 45 feet, and seated to accommodate 800 ladies and gentlemen, was fitted up, in a style corresponding with the reception and ball rooms, with seventeen tables, &c.——The price of gas at Lancaster is to be reduced 10d. per 1,000 cubic feet, and the street lamps 10s. each, from 1st July next. The price of gas will then be 5s. 10d. per 1,000 cubic feet.——By the way, we feel it to be a duty to ourselves, no less than to the gas companies at Leeds, here to state, that, from evidence forwarded to us, it appears that the old establishment there not only 'accompanied' the new in the reduction of price, noticed in our last impression, but preceded it, the new company having two days afterwards followed the example of the old in issuing circulars to that effect.——North Ferriby Church is in rapid progress, the walls being now about ten feet high. They are of grey rubble stone in random courses, with dressed masonry at all the quoins and jambs. The architect is Mr. J. L. Pearson, of Kepple-street, Russell-square, and Messrs. Kirby and Co., of Swanland, the contractors; the latter of whom have just completed a small church at Wandby, in the East Riding. We are glad, by the way to perceive some symptoms of the beneficial operation of our repeated remarks on the injustice done to architects, builders, &c., in the neglect of all allusion to them in public notices of new buildings. There are considerably more than the average of such notices in the past week's newspapers.——The keep of the ancient castle at Newcastle-upon-Tyne is about to be restored, under the direction of the Society of Antiquaries there, who have obtained permission from the corporation to proceed in the work. ——The Roman Catholics of Edinburgh have concluded the purchase of a large space of ground on the Lothian road, for the erection of a magnificent cathedral. At present they have two chapels, neither of them possessing much architectural attraction.——Government has granted 3,000*l.* for the completion of the buildings connected with the University of St. Andrews.——According to the *Glasgow Reformers' Gazette*, an additional infirmary is much wanted for that city. The directors it is thought have gone on too long on the patching system, and the Gazette thinks, that "if there was philanthropy in Glasgow sufficient during the last century to build the *old* infirmary, and during these last seven years to build a new Lunatic Asylum, more resembling a palace than any thing else" it cannot be doubted that the like necessities will still continue to urge the public feeling on towards the establishment of this much needed addition to the accommodation for the infirm poor.——Government, says the *Times*'s Dublin correspondent, "appear, by dear-bought experience, to be thoroughly convinced of the total failure and ruinous effects of the public works system as a mode of alleviating the great national calamity, and, evidently impressed with that conviction, have resolved, let the consequences be what they may, to retrace their steps with all possible speed, and push the new relief measure into general operation." The public works labour roll for the four weeks ending 3rd April, is as follows:—March 6th 734,792; March 20th, 664,442: March 27th, 558,047; April 3rd, 525,514.

PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS' ESTIMATES.

The miscellaneous services estimates under this head for 1847-8 amount to 575,734*l.*, or larger by 112,804*l.* than those for last year. The chief items of increase are for Buckingham Palace, 30,000*l.*; New Houses of Parliament, 77,600*l.* On Harbours of Refuge, 110,000*l.*; there is a decrease of 21,252*l.* on Holyhead Harbour, works, roads &c. The estimates proposed are: royal buildings and royal palaces, 117,989*l.*; Buckingham Palace, 50,000*l.*; Palm House at Kew, 5,500*l.*; Houses of Parliament (temporary), 17,709; New Houses of Parliament, 150,000*l.*; Home Office, Board of Trade, &c., 11,435*l.*; Holyhead Harbour, roads, &c., 4,429*l.*; Harbours of Refuge, 140,000*l.*; Caledonian Canal, 50,000*l.*; public buildings, &c., in Ireland, 20,470*l.*; Kingstown Harbour, 8,500*l.*—total, 575,738*l.* The "cost of the several works required for enlarging and improving Buckingham Palace," which is estimated at 150,000*l.*, is said to be for "new east front to the Palace; clearing out and re-arranging rooms in south wing; alterations in the north wing; new kitchens and other offices, with ball-room over; decorations and painting; taking down the marble arch; alteration of drains, &c." The Palm House at Kew is reported to have so far advanced that the great outer scaffolding is nearly removed. The vast central framework is complete, and the side walls and ventilators are nearly finished. The gallery, balustrade, and spiral staircase are also nearly all completed, and the two wings are begun, their concrete foundation and several granite blocks laid, and the surrounding terrace in progress.

The Royal Academy Portraits.—We have received a letter from Mr. Knight, the deputy secretary, denying in strong terms the statement made in last week's Builder. We can assure Mr. Knight, notwithstanding, that its truth, so far as relates to asking for beer-money, is re-asserted by three correspondents of undoubted respectability. To the inference that was drawn we attach no weight, and have no desire, indeed, to say more on the subject. Enough has been said, probably, to prevent a repetition of the practice, which all must admit is open to the strongest objection.

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